



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

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OFFICE OF  
ENFORCEMENT AND  
COMPLIANCE ASSURANCE

Dear Colleague,

Since its inception, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has relied on a strong aggressive enforcement program as the centerpiece of its efforts to ensure compliance with national environmental laws. This approach has not only served the nation well, it has created a culture of environmental compliance that is unsurpassed in the world. Federal agencies, just like private parties, are required to comply with all environmental requirements. EPA's goal is for Federal facilities compliance with environmental requirements to equal or surpass other regulated entities and that Federal facilities lead the way in environmental performance.

To assist Federal agencies in meeting mandated requirements under various laws and Executive Orders, EPA has developed this *Guide to Environmental Enforcement and Compliance at Federal Facilities*, commonly referred to as *The Yellow Book*, to serve as a roadmap for Federal agency compliance. The Yellow Book's primary purpose is to provide field-level personnel with environmental responsibilities at Federal facilities with a comprehensive informational tool to both help them comply with environmental requirements and to understand the enforcement and compliance processes used by EPA at Federal facilities.

Over the last decade, the role of Federal facilities in pollution control and abatement has been scrutinized by Congress, the public, and the media. In response, Congress has modified existing laws and enacted new ones to clarify that Federal agencies must comply with environmental requirements. For example, one of the more significant laws affecting Federal facilities, the Federal Facilities Compliance Act of 1992, requires that Federal facilities comply with all applicable Federal, State, interstate, and local solid and hazardous waste requirements. The law provides EPA and States with authority to assess fines and penalties against Federal facilities under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. Also, EPA and States gained additional Federal facility enforcement authorities as a result of the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996. And more recently, EPA's enforcement and penalty authorities for Federal facilities has been clarified for the Clean Air Act and Underground Storage Tank programs.

In addition, Federal agencies are subject to the requirements of several Executive Orders (E.O.) that address environmental issues. E.O. 12088, *Federal Compliance with Pollution Control Standards*, not only makes the head of each Federal agency responsible for compliance with applicable pollution control standards, it also directs EPA to provide technical advice and

assistance to those agencies to ensure effective and timely compliance. Also, E.O. 12856, *Federal Compliance with Right-to-Know Laws and Pollution Prevention Requirements*, directs Federal Agencies to practice pollution prevention by developing agency strategies and facility plans that promote source reduction and also directs EPA to provide technical assistance to Federal Agencies to meet those requirements.

In closing, I would like to stress that while EPA will continue to encourage a strong and aggressive Federal facilities enforcement program, we also stand ready to provide compliance assistance which promotes pollution prevention. In this way, EPA is helping to build the capacity of Federal facilities to move toward cleaner, cheaper, and smarter methods of environmental management and compliance.

Steve Herman  
Assistant Administrator